



Monthly Report for August 2014

Submitted September 5, 2014

General

Staffing

Staffing the vacant ETL Analyst, Database Analyst, and Web Developer positions continues to be a problem. Despite advertising with new sources, the Center continues to receive either no applications or applications from unqualified candidates. One possible approach being considered is to open the search up to non-immigrant temporary workers through the H-1B visa program. That program allows U.S. employers to temporarily employ foreign workers in specialty occupations. The MSDE personnel office does not accept or hire applicants on an H-1B visa, but it is permissible and other state agencies do currently employ foreign workers. Dawn O'Croinin, AAG, has consulted with Bruce Martin, AAG for the Department of Budget and Management who confirmed that it is permissible, but not a preferred practice. The Center has received several highly qualified applications from non-immigrant temporary workers for ETL Analyst and Database Analyst positions. Accordingly, if the Center utilizes the H-1B visa program, we are confident that we will finally fill those vacant positions.

As mentioned, work continues to proceed in most aspects with the help of various MSDE contractors. However, there is no contractor available to provide web development assistance at this time, leaving the web development phase of the project behind schedule. The vendor that the Center had engaged for web development services is still trying to find an acceptable replacement for the contractor who left early last month.

Inter-Agency Agreements

The Administrative MOU between the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation and the Center has been completed. Accordingly, all of the data sharing and administrative MOUs with each of the partner agencies have been completed. Currently, Ms. O'Croinin is working with MSDE on an agreement to establish terms and conditions for the data center hosting services at MSDE.

Systems Management Branch

During the past month staff has been working to deploy servers, software and to stand up a production environment at MSDE. This solution will be more sustainable and offer greater control and access to the Center staff, while not compromising security.

Data Collection from the agencies has been progressing nicely, with data loaded into the operational data store from all the agencies. The data warehouse is complete as well with data cubes being defined and developed.

Policy and Information Services Branch

Most staff effort has been devoted to providing support to the Systems Management Branch to help complete the projects noted above. Work continues on project planning, as well as developing content for the website in anticipation of a solution to the web development staffing problem.

Research Services Branch

The researchers are eagerly anticipating the start of the Research Series for the 2014-2015 academic year. In October there will be a panel discussion focused on the rapidly growing area of online education. The presentation for December is also set and will be a presentation by Associate Professor Laura Stapleton and UMCP Doctoral Student Dan McNeish (both members of the MLDSC Research Team) of an analysis they have done looking at the educational preparation of students heading into STEM fields.

Professor Woolley has been leading the search process for a full time Research Coordinator for the MLDS Center. Two candidates are coming to campus for all-day visits/interviews on September 11th (Yoonjeung Kang) and September 22nd (Angela Henneberger). Both candidates will be giving research presentations from 12pm to 1:15pm in the School of Social Work Building and you all are of course invited to attend those presentations. During the day long visit, an interview has been organized for both candidates to meet with several key MLDS staff members and other MLDS key stakeholders.

Starting this fall, three doctoral students will be working with the Research Team. Dan McNeish and Allison Heft will be at College Park working with Dr. Stapleton and Susan Klumpner will be at Baltimore working with Dr. Woolley.